

Springfield



The Home of Abraham Lincoln

BY PAUL M. ANGLE

Secretary, Abraham Lincoln Association

Compliments of the
CONVENTION AND PUBLICITY BUREAU
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Springfield, Illinois

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

- 1809 Born in Hardin County, Kentucky.
- 1816 Moved to Spencer County, Indiana.
- 1830 Moved to Macon County, Illinois.
- 1831 Became a resident of New Salem.
- 1834 Elected a Representative from Sangamon in General Assembly of Illinois.
- 1837 Became a resident of Springfield.
- 1842 Married Mary Todd.
- 1846 Elected a Representative to Congress.
- 1856 Joined the Republican Party.
- 1858 Attained national prominence through debates with Stephen A. Douglas.
- 1860 Elected President of the United States.
- 1862 Issued Proclamation of Emancipation.
- 1864 Re-elected President of the United States.
- 1865 Assassinated.

The Home of Abraham Lincoln

With the outlines of Abraham Lincoln's life—his birth in backwoods Kentucky, the poverty of his youth in an Indiana wilderness, his tenacious struggle in law and politics, his gradual triumph, culminating in the Presidency and martyrdom—everyone is familiar. But not everyone realizes how many visual reminders of his life—buildings where Lincoln worked, the home in which he lived, the tomb in which he is buried—are to be found in the city of his home, Springfield, Illinois.

Lincoln was twenty-eight years old when he came to Springfield to live. For several years past he had been living twenty miles away, at New Salem. There he had engaged in numerous occupations—grocery clerk, soldier, merchant, surveyor, postmaster, and, since 1834, member of the state legislature. But every occupation except the last had proved either a failure or a stop-gap, and so, to provide a livelihood, he had taken up the study of the law. Lincoln tells his own story: "He studied with nobody. He still mixed in the surveying to pay board and clothing bills. When the legislature met, the law-books were dropped but were taken up again at the end of the session In the autumn of 1836 he obtained a law license, and on April 15, 1837, re-



*Where Stuart and Lincoln
practiced.*

moved to Springfield and commenced the practice—his old friend Stuart taking him into partnership.”

This was John T. Stuart, the man who in the beginning had urged Lincoln to study law. The new firm was called Stuart and Lincoln, and endured until the spring of 1841. During these four years the two partners occupied an office then designated as “No. 4, Hoffman’s Row, upstairs.” Although nearly one hundred years old, and naturally greatly modified, the old building is still standing on its original site, 109 North Fifth Street.

Upon the dissolution of the firm of Stuart and Lincoln, Lincoln became the junior partner of Stephen T. Logan, deservedly remembered as one of Illinois’ greatest lawyers. At first the two men occupied an office directly across the street from that of the preceding firm, but before long they moved to another old building still standing in the heart of Springfield, on the southwest corner of Sixth and Adams Streets. At the time Logan and Lincoln made it the location of their office, the building was marvelously new—one of the show places of the town. The law office was at the front of the third

floor. Underneath were the rooms of the United States Court, to the semi-annual sessions of which came most of Illinois’ prominent attorneys.

In the autumn of 1844 the Logan-Lincoln partnership was dissolved, and in its place was formed that of Lincoln and Herndon, terminated only by Lincoln’s death more than twenty years later. For several years Lincoln and Herndon



*Where Logan and Lincoln
practiced.*



*The Hall of the House of Representatives as it appeared in
Lincoln's time.*

occupied the office of the preceding firm, moving finally, however, to a building on the west side of the square where the Myers Building now stands.

During all his years at the law Lincoln never forgot his avocation—politics. His political activities, and to a large extent, his legal work too, were closely connected with one of the most interesting, most historic buildings in the Middle West—the old Illinois State House.

In the same year that Lincoln came to Springfield the city was made the capital of Illinois, largely through his influence as an important member of the legislature. The construction of a state house was commenced at once, and the building was ready for partial occupancy in 1840. Lincoln was then serving his fourth and last term as a member of the House of Representative, and in that capacity his connection with the old State House first began.

That connection did not cease with the termination of his legislative services. It was customary, during Lincoln's life, to hold political meetings in the Hall of the



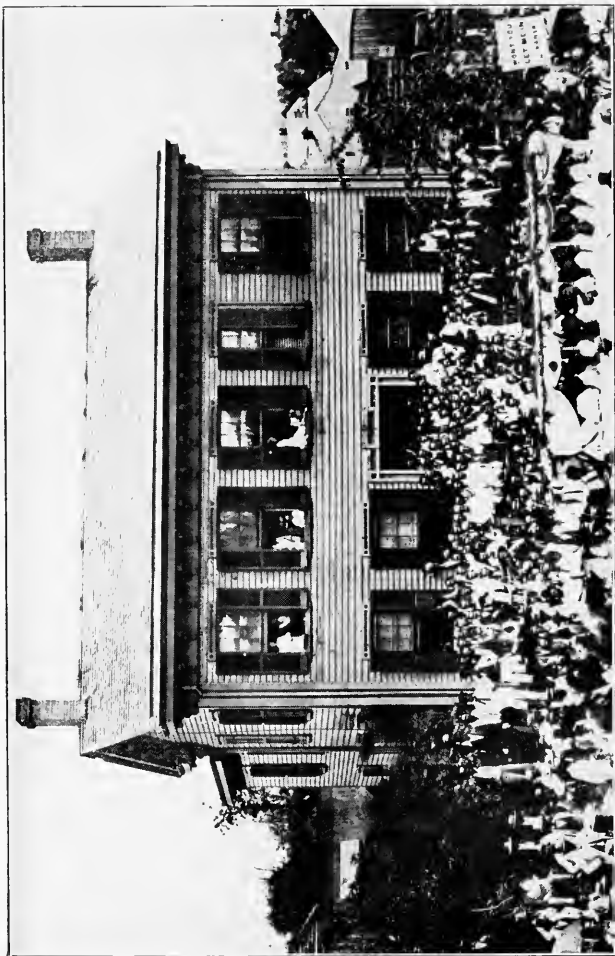
*State House (1837-1876). Note Sangamon County Court House.
(From collection of H. W. Fay)*

House of Representatives. There, on occasions beyond number, Lincoln sat and listened to the speeches of his political friends and enemies, and there, not infrequently, he himself spoke. It was in this room that he delivered, in 1858, what many students consider his greatest speech—that which opens with the famous words: “A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided.”

As a lawyer, too, Lincoln was frequently to be found in the old State House, for the Supreme Court held its sessions there. Before this court Lincoln tried nearly two hundred cases, attaining a greater degree of success than most lawyers can boast. Here too, was located the State Law Library, where not only Lincoln, but all the attorneys of the vicinity, came to consult authorities and prepare their briefs.

Soon after Lincoln's nomination his own shabby law office became too small for his needs. The legislature was not in session, and therefore, in those days of simple governmental activities, the governor's office in the State House was not needed for official business. So Lincoln made it his. In this small room, for eight months, he received the thousands of friends, politicians, newspaper correspondents and officers who thronged to Springfield to see the man who now was known as “Honest Old Abe.”

Not even his departure from Springfield was to completely sever Lincoln's connection with building in which so many vital hours of his life had been spent. When, after the assassination, his body was brought back to Springfield for burial, it lay in state for a day and a night in the Hall of the House of Representatives while a silent, seemingly endless line passed slowly by.



*The Lincoln Home in 1860. Lincoln is standing beside the doorway.
(From collection of H. W. Fay)*

For half a century the old State House has been used by Sangamon County as a court house. Some thirty years ago, in order to provide more room and eliminate needless fire hazards, it was remodeled and enlarged from two to three stories. So that the original appearance might be preserved faithfully as possible, the building was raised and the additional story placed underneath. It is hoped that some day the building will be restored to its original condition and made a permanent memorial to Abraham Lincoln.

During most of the years in which Lincoln was gaining an enviable position at the Illinois bar, and acquiring a national political reputation, he lived in the modest structure which has since become famous as the Lincoln Home. On November 4, 1842, he had married one of Springfield's belles, Miss Mary Todd. At once they took up their residence in the Globe Tavern, a small boarding house, "which," Lincoln wrote a friend, "is very well kept by a widow lady of the name of Beck. Our room and boarding only costs us four dollars a week." Within a year and a half, however, Lincoln had purchased a home of his own—a small, story and a half frame cottage situated at the corner of Eighth and Jackson Streets. The owner was the Rev. Mr. Charles Dresser—the minister who had married Lincoln and Mary Todd—and the purchase price was \$1,500.

With one short exception—Lincoln's only term in Congress—Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln lived in this home until their departure for Washington in February, 1861. An increasing family made enlargement necessary, so, in 1855, the upper half story was made full sized. Since that time the only change has been the addition of a one-story room at the rear.

The Lincoln home remained in the family until 1888, when Robert Lincoln deeded it to the State of Illi-



The National Lincoln Tomb.

nois. Since that time it has been open to the public. It is in charge of a resident custodian, and particular effort has been made to preserve the interior as it was during the residence of the Lincoln family.

The Lincoln law offices, the Lincoln home, the old State House—all these tell their story of Lincoln's life. His death meant the erection of a suitable tomb and memorial. Plans for this were laid at once, but was several years before they bore fruit in the present monument at Oak Ridge Cemetery. Funds for the monument were raised by popular contribution and state appropriation. The design adopted was that of Larkin G. Mead, at the time one of America's foremost artists. Like the Lincoln home, the monument is under the care of the State of Illinois. It too is in charge of a custodian, and is open to the public. It has become a shrine of such interest that hundreds of thousands visit it annually.

NEW SALEM

Twenty miles from Springfield is the old village of New Salem. Founded shortly before Lincoln took up his residence there in 1831, it ceased to exist—"winked out," as he himself described it—not long after his departure. Nevertheless, it was the scene of six colorful years in his life. Drifting in after a flat boat trip to New Orleans, Lincoln became the clerk of his employer on that expedition, Denton Offut, merchant adventurer of the little village. Soon Offut failed, and Lincoln spent a few months as a militiaman in the Black Hawk War. Returning, he set up in business for himself, only to meet failure again. But he obtained the postmastership, and this brought a



The Restored Village of New Salem.
(Photo by Herbert Georg. Collection of H. W. Fay.)

small income, soon to be eclipsed by his earnings in a new field, that of deputy county surveyor. Thus supported, he studied law, and prepared himself for his life's work.

In the meantime, after one defeat, Lincoln had been elected to the legislature, and was already gaining a reputation in politics. He had also tasted sorrow, for Ann Rutledge, whose story everyone knows, had died.

Some years ago, the site of the almost forgotten village of New Salem was purchased and made a state park. A memorial museum has been constructed, and several cabins have been rebuilt on the original locations. The park, which, aside from its historical interest, is one of the most beautiful spots in Illinois, is easily accessible from Springfield, and well worth a visit.



The Sangamon River at New Salem.
(Photo by Herbert Georg. Collection of H. W. Fay.)

Lincoln Collections in Springfield

THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY

Miss Georgia L. Osborne, *Librarian*

Everyone interested in the life of Abraham Lincoln should visit the Illinois State Historical Library, third floor of the Centennial Building, east entrance. The shelves contain over three thousands volumes on Lincoln's life, one of the largest collections in existence. The Lincoln Room of the Library houses a very interesting and important exhibit of Lincoln pictures, writings and furniture.

THE LINCOLN TOMB

Herbert Wells Fay, *Custodian*

To reach the tomb by automobile, go north on Sixth Street, following the signs. By street car: take North Fifth Street cars to Oak Ridge Cemetery.

THE LINCOLN HOME

Miss Virginia Stuart Brown, *Custodian*

The Lincoln Home is situated at the corner of Eighth and Jackson Streets. It is open to visitors from 10:00 to 12:00; and from 2:00 to 5:00. Sundays, 2:00 to 5:00 only.

The New Salem Park and Museum

There are two good automobile routes from Springfield to New Salem. The first (Route 24 north to Route 43A, Route 43A to Petersburg, thence to New Salem) is somewhat longer than the second, but is over hard roads entirely. The second (leave Springfield on Route 3, then follow New Salem signs) is more direct, and is in splendid shape in good weather.

Springfield Hotels

Abraham Lincoln. 300 Rooms. Rates: \$2.50 up.

Leland. 200 Room. . Rates: Without Bath, \$1.75-\$2.50; with bath, \$3.00-\$5.00.

St. Nicholas. 350 Rooms. Rates: Without bath, \$1.50-\$2.00; with bath, \$2.50 up.

Illinois. 125 Rooms. Rates: \$1.00-\$2.50.

Empire. 175 Rooms. Rates: \$1.25-\$2.50.



The Lincoln Home Today.

Lincoln Markers in Springfield

1. Sangamon County Court House, formerly the State House.

2. Lincoln Circuit Marker, northeast corner Lincoln Square. "Abraham Lincoln Traveled This Way as he rode the Circuit of the Eighth Judicial District, 1847-1857."

3. Illinois State Journal. Here, in a second story room, Lincoln received the news of his nomination as the Republican candidate for the Presidency. Site: 116 North Sixth Street.

4. Office of Lincoln and Logan, 1841-1844. Southwest corner of Sixth and Adams Streets, third floor. The tablet is on the Sixth Street side of the building beside the stairway. This is the original building.

5. The C. M. Smith Building, 528 East Adams Street. Here, in an upper room, Lincoln wrote his First Inaugural Address. This is the same building.

6. Office of Lincoln and Herndon. The site is now occupied by the Myers Building, corner of Fifth and Washington Streets. The office of Lincoln and Herndon was located on Fifth Street, third twenty feet from the corner, second floor. On the same site at an earlier date stood the Joshua Speed store, above which Speed and Lincoln lived during Lincoln's first months in Springfield.

7. Office of Stuart and Lincoln, 109 North Fifth Street. Site now occupied by the Stuart Confectionery Company. Though considerably modified, this is the original building.

8. The Chenery House. Here the Lincoln family lived for a few days prior to their departure for Washington in 1861. The hotel was located on the northeast corner of Fourth and Washington Streets, where the Illinois Hotel now stands.

9. The Chicago and Alton Passenger Station. At the old station, which stood on the same site as the present one (Third and Washington Streets) Lincoln's body was received in 1865.

10. The old First Presbyterian Church. Lincoln rented a pew in this church, which was located on the southeast corner of Third and Washington Streets.

11. The Globe Tavern. In this tavern the Lincolns lived after their marriage, and here Robert Lincoln, the first child, was born. Site: 315 East Adams Street.

12. The old Second Presbyterian Church. This building stood on the west side of Fourth Street between Monroe and Adams Streets. The legislature, of which Lincoln was at the time a member, met here upon the removal of the capitol from Vandalia to Springfield.

13. Present First Presbyterian Church. Northwest corner of Seventh Street and Capitol Avenue. This church contains the pew occupied by the Lincolns in the former church.

14. The Lincoln Home, corner of Eighth and Jackson Streets.

15. The Great Western Passenger Station, Tenth and Monroe Streets. Here, in 1861, Lincoln said farewell. The old passenger station has been transformed into a freight house, but in modified form it still stands.

16. The Ninian W. Edwards home. The site is now occupied by the Centennial Building, at the west end of which there is a tablet marking the spot where the Edwards home stood. In this home, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln were married, and there, in 1882, Mrs. Lincoln died.